

Bid Your Suits

II. When you have support for partner

By Neil Kimelman

This column is the second in a series of articles on guidelines for bidding your suit(s) in several common situations.

I. ii) When you have two suits and support for partner

An important bidding principle is to try and show where your values are located. Sometimes there is a choice of suits you can bid. For example with ♠K98 ♥K3 ♦9872 ♣AKJ2, 1♣ is a better opening bid than 1♦. On offence partner will give greater value to any honors in your bid suits. On defence he will often lead the suit you open.

The same principle applies when responding. Here is a recent hand I held that is a good example of what this looks like. I held at IMPs ♠10 ♥QJ10 ♦AKQ2 ♣108753. The bidding started:

West	North	East	South
-	1♥	1♠	?

I wanted to show my partner where my stuff was so he could evaluate his hand properly, so I bid 2♦. The full deal:

♠ A6		
♥ AK97432		
♦ J108		
♣ 4		
♠ 5432	♠ KQJ987	
♥ 65	♥ 8	
♦ 976	♦ 543	
♣ KJ96	♣ AQ2	
		♠10
		♥QJ10
		♦AKQ2
		♣108753

The bidding continued:

West	North	East	South
-	1♥	1♠	2♦
Pass	2♥	pass	3♠ ¹
Pass	4NT	pass	5♣
Pass	5♦ ²	pass	5NT ³
Pass	6♥	All pass	

¹Splinter

²Do you have the ♥Q partner?

³Yes, and the ♦K.

Had I responded 2♣ partner would have simply signed off in 4♥.

Here is another application of this principle that occurred at the 2011 Canadian Bridge Championships held in Regina. In our Quarter final match against the Zambonini team I picked up ♠109653 ♥J65 ♦Q5 ♣AK7 as north. The bidding started:

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1♥
pass	?		

I could either treat this hand as a limit raise or not. Being vulnerable with 10 HCPs and a ruffing value I decided this was too good for a simple raise. Once this was decided, I had two options to show a limit:

- 1) Bid 1♠ and then 3♥.
- 2) Bid 2♣, which we play as 10-11 HCPs, heart support and club values.

I chose option two. This to me is more descriptive. It shows where you live. Another way of looking at it is that you want partner to know that ♣Qxx is a good holding and ♠Qxx is not. The full deal:

♠109653
♥J65
♦Q5
♣AK7

♠ KQ87	♠ J2
♥ 94	♥ Q2
♦ K9862	♦ J1074
♣ 54	♣ J9863

♠A4
♥AK10873
♦A3
♣Q102

My partner drove to the under par slam which was a lucky make. However give partner ♠A ♥AK10873 ♦A3 ♣Q1042 then the slam is a good one, and is not reachable had you initially responded 1♠.

Lessons to Learn

- 1) Always look for opportunities to bid the suit(s) where your values are located.
- 2) The corollary to this first tip is that when partner bids a suit it is a good indication that he has some high cards there, but there are no guarantees. Keep an open mind.